

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 CU-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00 EB-07

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R 100821Z MAY 77

FM AMCONGSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 484

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 5289

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, CH, IN, UR, VN

SUBJ: VIETNAMESE EXTERNAL RELATIONS

SUMMARY: A THIRD-WORLD SOURCE RESIDENT IN HANOI TOLD CONGENOFF ON MAY 7 THAT SRV RELATIONS WITH THE USSR WERE DETERIORATING. SRV/PRC RELATIONS APPEARED TO IMPROVE SLIGHTLY FOLLOWING HUA KUO-FENG'S RISE TO POWER BUT ARE AGAIN COOLING. PHAN VAN DONG IS STILL SCHEDULED TO VISIT NEW DELHI IN THE FALL. END SUMMARY.

1. SRV/USSR RELATIONS. A WELL-INFORMED SOURCE OBSERVED THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN VIETNAM AND THE SOVIET UNION WERE NOT AS CLOSE AS BEFORE AND CITED SEVERAL SIGNS OF THIS DETERIORATION. SOVIETS HAD PROTESTED STRONGLY WHEN PHAN VAN DONG'S TRIP TO FRANCE WAS ANNOUNCED WHICH RESULTED IN THE VIETNAMESE SCURRYING AROUND TO THE
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ITALIAN, FRG, AND NORDIC EMBASSIES IN AN EFFORT TO BROADEN DONG'S VISIT TO A "EUROPEAN TRIP". THE TOP SOVIET LEADERSHIP DID NOT MEET WITH GENERAL GIAP DURING HIS VISIT TO MOSCOW. WITH THE EXCEPTION F SOME TECHNICAL PERSONNEL, FEW SOVIET DIPLOMATS HAVE BEEN PERMITTED TO TRAVEL TO SAIGON, AND ONE SENIOR SOVIET DIPLOMAT REPORTEDLY COMPLAINED THAT

HIS LONG-STANDING REQUEST TO VISIT SAIGON HAD NOT BEEN APPROVED, WHILE THE SOURCE HAD VISITED THERE FOUR TIMES.

2. THE VIETNAMESE HAVE CONSENTED TO SOVIET AND PRC CONSULATES IN SAIGON SCHEDULED TO OPEN IN JULY. HANOI AGREED ONLY AFTER THE SOVIETS COMPLAINED ABOUT THE ABSENCE OF A CONSULATE TO LOOK AFTER THEIR HEAVY SHIPPING LOAD AND THREATENED TO SEND ALL USSR SHIPS TO HAIPHONG IF THEY WERE NOT PERMITTED TO OPEN IN THE SOUTH (IN AN ASIDE, SOURCE NOTED THE JAPAN HAD NOT BEEN INCLUDED IN THE AGREEMENT TO OPEN NEW CONSULAR POSTS IN SAIGON CAUSING SOME CONSTERNATION). THE SOURCE CLAIMED THAT SUBSTANTIAL SOVIET AID DESTINED FOR LAOS PREVIOUSLY WAS SHIPPED TO HAIPHONG FOR OVERLAND TRANSIT, BUT NOW MOST SOVIET AID WAS FLOWN DIRECTLY TO LAOS. HE SUPECULATED THT PERHAPS THIS WAS AN INDICATION MOSCOW IS TRYING TO DEVELOP A RELATIONSHIP WITH LAOS INDEPENDENT OF THE SRV.

3. SRV/PRC RELATIONS. VIETNAMESE-CHINESE RELATIONS IMPROVED SLIGHTLY WITH THE COMING TO POWER OF HUA KUO-FENG BUT APPEARED TO BE DETERIORATING AGAIN. PRC AID SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN REDUCED DRASTICALLY, AND CHINESE SHIPS ENTER HAIPHONG EMPTY, RETURNING TO CHINA WITH COAL AND TIMBER IN PAYMENT FOR PAST LOANS. THE RATHER ABRUPT DEPARTURE OF THE PRC AMBASSADOR TO HANOI, FU HAO, WAS ALSO SEEN BY SOURCE AS INDICATING A FURTHER DECLINE IN RELATIONS. CONFIDENTIAL

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4. SRV/INDIAN RELATIONS. PHAN VAN DONG IS STILL SCHEDULED TO VISIT NEW DELHI SOME TIME IN THE FALL. INDIA IS HAVING SOME CONSULAR PROBLEMS WITH VIETNAM OVER THE DEPARTURE OF 16 WEALTHY INDIAN BUSINESSMEN STILL IN SAIGON. THESE ENTREPRENEURS HAD TURNED OVER THEIR PROPERTY TO THE STATE AND ARE NOW CLAIMING TO BE PENNILESS, BUT THE HAVE NOT BEEN PERMITTED TO LEAVE. THE SRV IS DEMANDING BACK TAXES BUT HAS NOT CHARGED THEM WITH ANY CRIMES.

5. COMMENTS FROM SOUTHERNERS. ONE FORMER SENIOR PRG OFFICIAL, NOW OSTENSIBLY IN CHARGE OF AN OFFICE IN SAIGON, COMPLAINED BITTERLY TO THE SOURCE THAT HE WAS IN CHARGE IN NAME ONLY SINCE ALL DECISIONS HAD TO BE APPROVED BY CADRE FROM THE NORTH. ANOTHER SRV OFFICIAL FROM THE SOUTH AGREED WITH THE SOURCE'S OBSERVATION THAT THERE APPEARED TO BE AN INCREASING NUMBER OF PROSTITUTES ON THE STREETS. THE

SOUTHERNER COMMENTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD
LITTLE HOPE OF CHANGING WASY OF THE PRESENT
GENERATON AND WAS CONCENTRATING ON THE YOUTH.
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